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Summary record of the 39th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 15 December 2003, at 5.30 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Chowdhury ..... (Bangladesh)

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The meeting was called to order at 5.30 p.m.

Organization of work

1. **Mr. Seth** (Secretary of the Committee) said that, because the Committee had negotiated the text of the remaining draft resolutions during informal consultations that same afternoon, they had not yet been translated into the other five official languages of the Organization. He therefore suggested that the Committee should adopt them with their current document symbols on the basis of the English text, as orally revised, on the understanding that they would later be issued in all official languages with a new symbol.

2. **Mr. Leglise-Costa** (France) said that his delegation attached great importance both to the draft resolutions, which were the product of lengthy negotiations, and to respect for the official languages of the United Nations. He could not agree to the adoption of the draft resolutions without seeing the French text thereof.

3. **Mr. Stanislavov** (Russian Federation) said that he associated himself with the statement made by the representative of France. By respecting the rule that draft resolutions must be published in all the official languages prior to their adoption, the Committee demonstrated the importance of the decisions that it took.

4. **Mr. Seth** (Secretary of the Committee) replied that the rule to which the representative of the Russian Federation had referred stated that draft resolutions should normally be submitted in all official languages. However, unless the Committee adopted the draft resolutions in question by 6 p.m., the Fifth Committee would be unable to take action on them the following day and the General Assembly's work would, in turn, be delayed. It was for the Committee to decide how to balance those conflicting constraints.

5. **The Chairman** said that he fully realized the importance of adopting draft resolutions on the basis of a text issued in the six official languages. However, it was the Committee's responsibility to ensure that the results of its work were submitted for consideration by the Fifth Committee the following day. The representatives of France and the Russian Federation had the moral, and perhaps the legal, high ground, but he appealed to them to accept the reality of the situation.

6. **Mr. Leglise-Costa** (France) said that on both moral and legal grounds, his delegation's position was unchanged. The Chairman must take a decision on the matter.

7. **Mr. Stanislavov** (Russian Federation) asked whether the remaining draft resolutions had programme budget implications; if not, there was no need for the Fifth Committee to consider them.

8. **The Chairman** said that while not all the draft resolutions had programme budget implications, all of them must be adopted at the current meeting. He suggested that the meeting should be suspended so that he could consult with concerned delegations and the Secretariat.

The meeting was suspended at 5.40 p.m. and resumed at 5.50 p.m.

9. **The Chairman** announced that the Secretariat had informed him that the draft resolutions could be translated into the remaining languages overnight. He had therefore decided to schedule a final meeting the Committee for 11 a.m. of the following day.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.